

REMARKS

Claims 36 to 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph. The rejections are respectfully traversed and the Examiner is requested to reconsider and withdraw the rejections in light of the following comments.

The Office Action took the position that the “limiting means” and the “constructing means” of Claims 36, 40 and 44, and the “generating means” of Claims 37, 41 and 45, were allegedly “not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the art that the inventor(s), at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.” However, Applicant wishes to direct the Examiner’s attention to the description provided at page 14, lines 6 to 13, which describes a limiting step being performed, page 12, line 24 to page 13, line 3, and page 14, line 22 to page 16, line 4, which describes a constructing step being performed, page 22, line 24 to page 24, line 2 and Figure 8, which describes a generating step being performed. Directly linked to each of the foregoing process steps being performed is the description found at page 10, line 3 to page 13, line 3, in conjunction with Figures 1 and 2, which describe various computer hardware, including a CPU 151, RAM 152, Program Memory 153, Hard Disk 154, etc., and a program 153a which includes computer code for performing various processing steps that are executed by the computer hardware. Thus, the description contained in the specification clearly supports the “limiting means”, “constructing means”, and “generating means” as constituting the program 153a being performed by the various computer hardware components depicted in Figures 1 and 2. Moreover, it is submitted that those skilled the art would readily understand the “limiting means”, “constructing means”, and “generating means” being constituted by such. Accordingly, the requirements of 35

U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, are met and the Examiner is requested to withdraw the rejection.

Claims 36 to 47 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,287,194 (Lobiondo) and two references incorporated therein by reference, namely, U.S. Patent No. 5,130,806 (Reed) and U.S. Patent No. 5,036,361 (Filion). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections are respectfully requested in light of the following.

The present invention concerns selecting an image output apparatus from among a plurality of image output apparatuses. According to the invention, selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, are limited within a range such that at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by the operator. A display device displays the limited selection conditions such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition. Then, a plurality of logical interfaces, for transmitting the print data directly to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses, are constructed within the workstation, where each of the plurality of logical interfaces respectively corresponds to the plurality of image output apparatuses. Finally, the generated print data is assigned to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses that is selected based on a selection condition designated by the operator and information which is stored in advance and which indicates print functions of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

As a result, the selection conditions that the operator can designate are limited so that at least one of the apparatus' satisfies a selection condition, and a display is

controlled such that only the limited selection conditions are displayed for designation by the operator.

With specific reference to the claims, newly-added Claim 36 is a data processing apparatus having a printer driver for generating print data in accordance with a print request issued by an application program and assigning the generated print data to one of a plurality of image output apparatuses. The data processing apparatus has a limiting means for limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range such that at least one of the plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by the operator. A control means controls a display device to display the selection conditions limited by the limiting means in a form such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition. A constructing means constructs, within the data processing apparatus, a plurality of logical interfaces, for transmitting the print data directly to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses, where each of the plurality of logical interfaces respectively corresponds to the plurality of image output apparatuses. The generated print data is then assigned to one of the plurality of image output apparatuses that is selected based on a selection condition designated by the operator and information which is stored in advance and which indicates print functions of the plurality of image output apparatuses.

Newly-added independent Claims 40 and 44 are method and memory medium claims, respectively, that substantially correspond to Claim 36.

The applied art, alone or in any permissible combination, is not seen to disclose or to suggest the features of Claims 36, 40 and 44. More particularly, the applied art is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions,

which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range such that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by an operator, and controlling a display device to display the limited selection conditions in a form such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition.

Lobiondo is merely seen to disclose a printshop scheduler routine which automatically schedules jobs at local or remote locations. The printshop scheduler schedules and distributes a job among a plurality of printers based upon information such as a time when the job is to be completed. However, Lobiondo is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range such that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by an operator, and controlling a display device to display the limited selection conditions in a form such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition.

In this regard, the Office Action essentially admits that Lobiondo itself fails to teach such a feature, but alleges that the incorporated Reed patent teaches the foregoing. However, Reed's Figure 7 is merely seen to disclose a conventional user interface that displays a job ticket depicting various job selections that have been programmed. A job scorecard displayed on the screen merely shows basic instructions to the system for printing the job. Moreover, it is not seen where Reed discloses that the selected conditions are limited within a range such that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by an operator. That is, all of the selection conditions depicted in Figure 7 of Reed appear to merely be standard conditions that may

be selected by the user even if an apparatus is incapable of performing a selected condition. Accordingly, the conditions are not seen to be limited such that at least one of a plurality of apparatus' satisfies the conditions. Further, there does not appear to be any disclosure in Reed that the display only depicts the limited selection conditions. Rather, it appears that Reed displays all possible conditions, regardless of whether or not an apparatus can perform the condition. As such, Lobiondo and the incorporated Reed, are not seen to disclose the features of the present invention.

Filion, which was cited merely as allegedly disclosing various features of the dependent claims, is not seen to add anything to overcome the foregoing deficiencies of Lobiondo and Reed and is also not seen to disclose or to suggest at least the feature of limiting selection conditions, which are associated with printing and capable of being designated by an operator, within a range such that at least one of a plurality of image output apparatuses satisfies a selection condition to be designated by an operator, and controlling a display device to display the limited selection conditions in a form such that the operator can designate a desired selection condition.

In view of the foregoing deficiencies of the applied art, all of Claims 36 to 47 are believed to be in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa,
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Respectfully submitted,



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